

Striking Similarity between Clay in Certain Portions of This State and in the Kimberly District of South Africa.

The following is a copy of Mr. Powell's communication to the Times-Union:

Editor Times-Union: There appeared in the Times-Union a few days ago an interesting interview with Hon. H. C. Crawford, Secretary of State, relative to the "Legend of Wakulla," as it is known in Middle Florida history and the famous buried Spanish treasure.

It has always been accepted as literally true by all of the old residents of Wakulla county that an untold amount of Spanish treasure was hidden in the vicinity of old Wakulla in great form chests of Spanish gold. The "Legend of Wakulla," familiar to all of the old families of Middle Florida. Hon. John L. Crawford, Secretary of State for many years who was succeeded by his son, Hon. H. W. Crawford, now Governor of Florida, moved to Wakulla county from Crawford county, Georgia, in the "forties," and among the old residents of Wakulla county in those days, the "Legend of Wakulla" was a familiar topic, among the many other mysterious and legendary subjects of Florida. Florida has many others not less interesting, some of which I shall mention in this article.

Fort of St. Marks.

To begin with it must be remembered that the old fort of St. Marks is one of the very oldest landmarks in the western hemisphere, that in those ancient days the primordial forest did not reach lower than the foot hills of the Appalachian range.

The foothill line in this vicinity is about three miles south of Tallahassee, and something less, west of town; thence to the coast it was an expanse of coast plain resembling in all probability the Llanos of South America, covered with a genus of tall sweeping sea coast grass. The habitat then of these ancient settlers could not have been at the coast, except for the garrison, because it was extremely unhealthy.

Sought the Streams.

Therefore, the Apalachian range coming nearer the coast at this point than any other on the entire Gulf coast they naturally sought the streams from the foot hills of the Apalachian range where they reached the forest. Game was in abundance, and whatever of agriculture, primitive as it was in those ancient days, that could be tried on.

The Spanish Ships.

That there was such a traffic for so centuries, of which we have but meager account, is irrefutable, in the

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light of modern deductions from the old landmarks left us of this ancient commerce. Doubtless even a ship that entered the Mexican gulf during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, touched at the old St. Marks fort. The goal of the Spaniard was exploration; they combed the coast of South America, and when they desired to penetrate the unknown regions beyond the coast of New America they crossed those ancient galleons at the mouth of old St. Marks and with smaller craft ascended the small streams, it being then doubtless well known that from St. Marks the foothills were nearer than at any other point, and they naturally mapped their route from that ancient point.

Besides, there was a chain of lakes in those days that do not now appear. There was much more water than now, and it was possible to go from St. Marks in quite large craft, by the famous Wakulla Spring, one of the greatest natural wonders of the continent, a crystal basin 200 feet deep; thence by and through a chain of lakes to Lake Jackson, some twenty miles in length and north of Tallahassee about six miles.

Where Treasure Lies.
The theory of the writer then is that this Spanish treasure was not left at St. Marks, but that it lies buried at this day somewhere on the red hills of old Leon county, north of Tallahassee on the banks of Lake Jackson.

To further bear out this theory, the fact is that the aborigines always sought such points to build their ancient mounds, in which they buried their dead and yet hidden treasures. These mounds are not only found on Lake Jackson, but only a few miles west of this locality is one of the largest of these ancient mounds in America, which was reached also by a small stream, from the Chattanooga river, now called Kolomokee Creek, for a point a few miles above Blakely, Ga. where there is this day one of the largest and finest pure white chalk mines on the continent; yet undeveloped.

I remember this ancient mound as a boy. It is a pretty good size little mountain. My contention is, then, that if the mystery of the "Wakulla Legend" is ever solved, as it may be some day, it must be found at some ancient point on the lower Apalachian foot hill range.

The Treasure Hunters.
As enchanting as this story is, the half of it has nor perhaps ever will be told, except what the surface of this ancient territory may reveal to us in the light of modern deductions.

That the Spaniards of those ancient days and the aborigines carried on an extensive commerce at St. Marks fort cannot be refuted. What formed the bulk of their commerce can only be conjectured, but one thing is certain the Spaniards themselves were a nation of treasure hunters. They perhaps found no gold on the foot hills of the Apalachian range, but the evi-

dence is resistible that they did find pearls of great price and value in the placid streams that ran from these foothills into the Gulf. What I am about to relate may sound stranger than fiction, and perhaps it is, but it is true nevertheless, as abundant evidence in the Sopchoppy valley shows to this day, for at points just below these foot hills, in Wakulla county, on the banks of the Sopchoppy, and some of its tributaries, are great deposits of decayed pearl oyster shell, many thousands of tons of them. How did they come there? There is, nor can there be but one answer to that question—they were ancient pearl fisheries, for occasionally, now very rare pearls are found and obtained from the mussel-shell in this vicinity.

Are Diamonds There?
Yet this is not all. The Legend of Wakulla must unfold yet one more of its wonderful mysteries, before I close this article. I will give it for what it may be worth, not that there is anything in it. I am only drawing deductions in the premises, let the inferences be what they may.

The foot hills of the Apalachian range in the counties of Gadsden, Leon, Jefferson and Wakulla have within recent years revealed a great portion of their secrets. May they not reveal more?

The greatest known present value of their buried treasure is their fine clays, porcelain, kaolin, chalk, cement and fullers earth. It is of these clays that I desire now to speak, and I am speaking not only from a theoretical deduction, but from facts as they exist, tangible in all respects. My contention is that it is entirely within the bounds of possibility, near to probability, that some of these most remarkable clays are pure carbon bearing clays.

Quality of Clays.
I make this deduction from the fact that all clays for commercial use must be comparatively free from pebble, therefore pebble bearing clays have not heretofore been in demand.

It is a remarkable fact that some of these pebble clays have the same outward appearance of the South African peninsular diamond bearing clays; whether they are chemically the same is yet to be determined; that they are similar in appearance and consistency is true.

I refer to the hard blue deep clays of this section, and the pebble bearing strata of such clays, prospected to some extent and known to exist to a great depth at points near these foot hills. The Kimberly mines of South Africa, furnishing at the present time the diamond industry of the world, is only six miles in extent. They were discovered by accident. That there are clays in the foot hills of the Appalachian range that are diamond bearing clays, is irrefutable, if these deductions be true.

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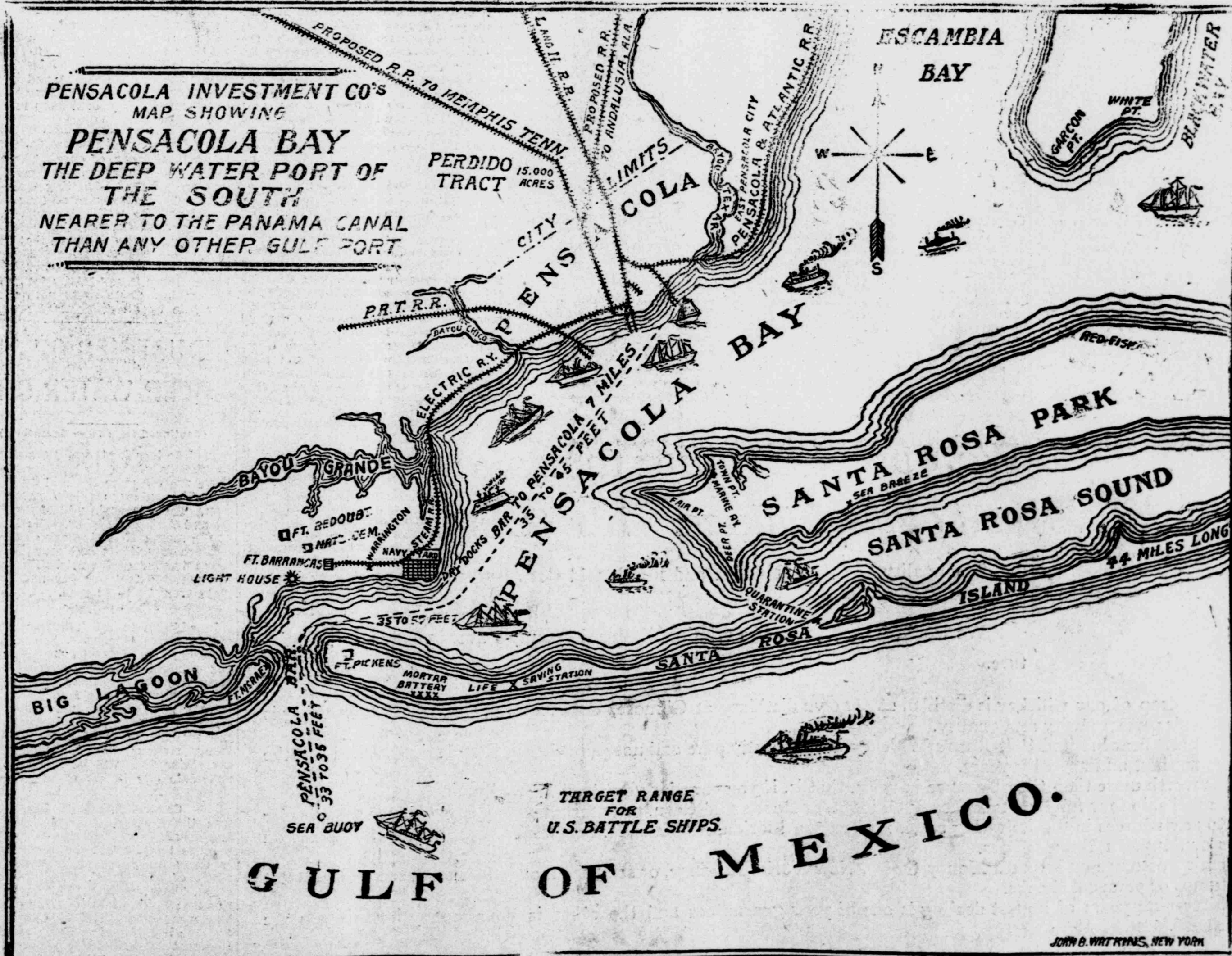
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